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SUBJECT: EMBASSY CAIRO'S NOMINATION: THE SECRETARY'S AWARD
FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF COURAGE

REF: STATE 12871

11. (U) Per reftel, Embassy Cairo nominates Ambassador Moushira Khattab, President of the National Council for Motherhood and Childhood (NCCM), for the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage. Ambassador Khattab is one of Egypt's most outspoken and inspirational leaders lobbying for the rights of women and children. As the head of the NCCM, she not only has considerable influence with policy makers, but also commands admiration and respect from grassroots women activists for her leadership, commitment, vision, and courage.

12. (U) Since the beginning of her tenure as Secretary-General of the NCCM in 1999, Ambassador Khattab set

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an agenda of progressive reform in Egyptian family law. Combating the widespread practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) both at the grassroots level and with policy makers is one of her top priorities. NCCM also focuses on greater access to education for girls. Ambassador Khattab is the primary author of a national plan of action on girls' education, and NCCM works closely with NGO's to ensure that future generations of Egyptian women receive the skill sets they need to succeed. Finally, she is leading a fight against child labor and protecting the rights of often neglected street children.

13. (U) Ambassador Khattab's work is remarkable and courageous because she tackles sensitive and often taboo subjects. As a close associate of First Lady Suzanne Mubarak, she is able to effectively influence policy making, while clearly maintaining the trust and confidence of grassroots organizations. She not only leads the fight for positive reform of Egyptian society, but does so in such a unique and far reaching way that she is worthy of receiving the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage.

14. (U) The officer covering Women's Issues in Cairo is Kimberly Harrington: harringtonkd@state.gov.
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